



# Washington State Department of Agriculture News Release

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WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
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## Hearing set in Yakima on proposal to eliminate peach container rules

**OLYMPIA** – In order to provide greater flexibility for peach growers to attract retailers and consumers with innovative packaging technologies, the Washington State Department of Agriculture is proposing to eliminate a section of state law dealing with peach containers.

A public hearing will be held at 1:30 p.m. April 27 at the WSDA office at 21 N. First Ave., Yakima.

“Removing the container requirements would allow growers, packers and shippers more flexibility to respond to the needs of retail buyers and consumers,” said Jim Quigley, manager of the Fruit & Vegetable Inspection Program at WSDA.

If adopted, the proposal eliminates a section of the Washington Administrative Code that specifies container capacities for peaches. Hearing notices have been sent to industry representatives and growers.

There are about 400 peach growers in Washington. In 2005, growers produced 22,000 tons of peaches on 2,900 acres. At \$535 per ton, the value of Washington's peach crop totaled \$11.8 million, according to statistics from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service, Washington Field Office in Olympia. The top five counties with acreage in peaches are Yakima, Franklin, Benton, Klickitat and Grant counties.

Fruit and Vegetable Inspection Program inspectors check the quality and condition of fruits and vegetables to ensure produce meets state standards as well as federal marketing orders and export requirements.

Information on the peach container proposal is on the WSDA Web site at <http://agr.wa.gov/LawsRules/Rulemaking/CI/PeachStandards.htm>. Comments are due by 5 p.m. on April 27 and may be sent to Debbie Hacker, Fruit & Vegetable Inspection Program, Commodity Inspection Division, Washington State Department of Agriculture, P.O. Box 42560, Olympia, WA 98504-2560; by e-mail at [dhacker@agr.wa.gov](mailto:dhacker@agr.wa.gov) or FAX to the program at (360) 902-2085.

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